



Fact Sheet

South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control • www.scdhec.gov

Strep Pharyngitis

What Is <i>strep pharyngitis</i>?	Strep pharyngitis is a highly contagious bacterial infection caused by a Group A Strep bacteria. It is sometimes referred to as tonsillitis or strep throat. Group A streptococcus is a bacterium often found in the throat and on the skin. People may carry group A streptococci in the throat or on the skin and have no symptoms of illness. Most GAS infections are relatively mild illnesses such as "strep throat," or impetigo. On rare occasions, these bacteria can cause other severe and even life-threatening diseases
What are the symptoms?	The symptoms of streptococcal pharyngitis include sore throat, pain on swallowing, fever, swollen and tender lymph nodes in the neck, and fatigue. The tonsils are swollen and often covered with pus. The roof of the mouth may have fine red lesions. Cough, hoarseness, and runny nose are NOT symptoms of streptococcal pharyngitis. Most sore throats are not due to streptococcal infections. When strep throat is accompanied by a red rash and fever, it is called scarlet fever.
How is <i>strep pharyngitis</i> treated?	Treating an infected person with an antibiotic for 24 hours or longer generally eliminates their ability to spread the bacteria. However, it is important to complete the entire course of antibiotics as prescribed.
How do people catch this disease?	Group A strep bacteria are spread through direct contact with mucus from the nose or throat of persons who are infected, or through contact with infected wounds or sores on the skin. Ill persons, such as those who have strep throat or skin infections, are most likely to spread the infection.
What can be done to stop the spread of this disease?	The spread of all types of Group A strep infection can be reduced by good hand washing, especially after coughing and sneezing and before preparing foods or eating. Persons with sore throats should be seen by a doctor who can perform tests to find out whether the illness is strep throat. If the test result shows strep throat, the person should stay home from work, school, or day care until 24 hours after taking an antibiotic.

SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL

Region 7

Serving Berkeley, Charleston and Dorchester Counties

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